

Friends: In presenting your child for baptism, you announce your faith in Jesus Christ, and show that you want your son to study him, know him, love him and serve him as his chosen disciple.

Show your purpose by answering these questions.

PASTOR: Who is your Lord and Savior?

PARENTS: Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

PASTOR: Do you trust him?

PARENTS: I do.

PASTOR: Do you intend your son to be his disciple, to obey his word and show his love?

PARENTS: I do.

ELDER: Our Lord Jesus Christ ordered us to teach those who are baptized. Do you, the people of the church, promise to tell this new disciple the good news of the gospel, to help him to know all that Christ commands, and by your fellowship, to strengthen the Marsac family ties with the household of God?

SPONSORS: We do.

ELDER: Do you, this child's sponsors, promise to support his parents in raising Scott as a Christian, and do you promise to help Scott directly to grow in discipleship and faith?

SPONSORS: We do.

Let us pray.

God our Father, we thank you for your faithfulness, promised in this sacrament, and for the hope we have in your Son Jesus. As we baptize with water, fill us with the Holy Spirit, so that what we say may be your word and what we do may be your work. By your power, may we be one with Christ our Lord in common faith and purpose.

(unison) O GOD WHO CALLED US FROM DEATH TO LIFE: WE GIVE OURSELVES TO YOU, AND WITH THE CHURCH THROUGH ALL AGES, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR SAVING LOVE IN JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

What is the Christian name of this child?

Scott Geoffrey, child of the covenant, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

This child of God is now received into the holy catholic church. See what love the Father has given us, that we should be called children of God; and we are!

Let us pray.

Almighty God, giver of life: You have called us by name, and pledged to each of us your faithful love. We pray for your child Scott. Watch over him. Guide him as he grows in faith. Give him understanding and a quick concern for his neighbors. Help him to be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, who was baptized your son and servant, who is our risen Lord.

God of grace, Father of us all: we pray for his parents, Geoff and Nancy. Help them to know you, to love with your love, to teach with your truth, and to tell the story of Jesus to their child, so that your word may be heard, and bring about plans for us which you have promised, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(unison) HOLY GOD: REMIND US OF THE PROMISES GIVEN IN OUR BAPTISM, AND RENEW OUR TRUST IN YOU. MAKE US STRONG TO OBEY YOUR WILL, AND TO SERVE YOU WITH JOY: FOR THE SAKE OF JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. AMEN.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Scott Geoffrey Marsac
Born November 21, 1978

Son of
William Geoffrey Marsac and
Nancy Jean Stevenson Marsac

*Sponsors: Marie and Dave Boltz
Gay and Mike Deamer
Judy and Don Mengel
Heidi Maschman
Lois Pinto (Mrs. John)
Lynn Schroeder
*representing the sponsorship
of the church

Participating as members of the K-Group:
Cus Perfetti and Dan Sutherland

Deacon: Eleanor Moffett

Elder Representatives:
Lynn Schroeder and Dave Boltz

Pastor: Reverend James M. Moffett

A Koinonia Group of the First Presbyterian Church
of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
meeting at
1133 Raymond Avenue, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania

June 4, 1979

THE ORDER FOR BAPTISM

Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ:
"All authority in heaven and on earth has
been given to me. Go therefore and make
disciples of all nations, baptizing them
in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to
observe all that I have commanded you;
and lo, I am with you always, to the close
of the age."

Obedying the word of our Lord Jesus, and
sure of his presence with us, we baptize
those whom he has called to be his own.

In Jesus Christ, God has promised to
forgive our sins, and has joined us to-
gether in the family of faith which is
his church. He has delivered us from
darkness and transferred us to the
kingdom of his beloved Son. In Jesus
Christ, God has promised to be our Father;
and to welcome us as brothers and sisters
of Christ.

Know that the promises of God are for
you. By baptism, God puts his sign on
you to show that you belong to him, and
gives you his Holy Spirit as a guarantee
that, sharing Christ's reconciling work
you will also share his victory; that,
dying with Christ to sin, you will be
raised with him to new life.

WHY BAPTIZE BABIES?

Why baptize children, even babies? Many people who themselves were baptized as babies are uncertain about the answer.

What does the Bible say? What did the early church do? Actually, the Bible does not tell us. To be sure, we read of entire "households" being baptized--but we cannot prove that these households included babies.

Instead, the Bible tells us what baptism is, not how or when to administer it. If the baptism of infants can genuinely express what baptism means in the Bible, well and good. If not, we should discontinue it no matter how long it has been practiced.

If it is used as a sentimental social custom, or if parents think baptism magically guarantees a baby's salvation, then it is not what the Bible tells us it means.

What we do know, is that baptism is primarily an act of God, even when it is initiated by parents. The child--as each one of us--must come to a decision of faith that no one else can make for ^{himself} us. The scriptures tell us that baptism expresses God's will, not just the will of the parent or church. Baptism raises the deepest question that can be asked: How deep are the roots of my life?

If our origin lies in God's purpose, ("to love God and enjoy him forever", as the Westminster Catechism says is God's purpose for us) so does our destiny. God loves and seeks and claims us long before we have ever sought and loved God. Indeed, we can love God only because God first loved us. Unseen and often unrecognized, God is in our midst--and the clue to life lies in this awareness. If the final issue depended on how well we knew and obeyed God, who of us could stand? The same apostle Peter who in one glorious moment confesses Jesus as the Christ, in another moment denies he ever knew him. We need some stronger ground than our own poor pledge and fickle loyalty. Our faith rests on God's faithfulness.

God assures us that He will be our God, and this has always been so and always will be--from everlasting to everlasting. Here the differences between child and adult do not really matter, for back of both stands the God who has known them both from all eternity. Even more clearly than in the baptism of those who have already come to faith's decision, the baptism of infants makes clear that God first loved us. This is fundamental to the New Testament: "When the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own mercy." (Titus 3:4)

Secondly, the Bible says that we are not strangers to God, because God came to us as a human being (Jesus) and through his crucifixion and resurrection he made us his own. Christian baptism, whether administered to children of believers or to an adult believer, is a sacrament which says that Jesus Christ was already baptized for us. In his own baptism Jesus entered into the costly ministry of love that led him to his baptism of blood. "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!" (Luke 12:50), he says as he nears the cross.

The basis of Christian baptism is not individual faith but Jesus' baptism for us. We are baptized in his name. We are given his name. Here again, in baptism the difference between child and adult is overcome, for back of both stands the cross as the decisive event. And ahead for both is the future, the life in Christ.



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CERTIFICATE OF
Baptism

*Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.*

Matthew 28:19

CERTIFICATE OF Baptism

This Certifies that

Child of _____

and _____

Date of birth _____

Was baptized in

on the _____ day of _____

in the year of our Lord 19_____

in the Name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.

Pastor

